

Serial No.: 09/917,757

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-52 and 54-56, as amended, remain herein.

Applicants appreciate the statements in the Office Action that claims 4, 8, 9, 15, 24, 27, 28, 30, 32-38, 43 and 47-52 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the independent claim(s) from which they depend.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the subject matter of claim 3 and allowable claim 9, thereby making claims 2, 4-8 and 10-56, which depend from claim 1, allowable. The wording added to claim 1 differs from claim 9 in that the word "back-plate" has been replaced by "side." This substitution does not alter the reasons for allowability applied to claim 9, and therefore claim 1 as so amended is allowable. Claims 3 and 9 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim 53, indicated as being "withdrawn" on the Office Action Summary page, was cancelled in the Preliminary Amendment filed July 31, 2001.

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The Abstract and claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-19, 24-28, 31-42, 46, 48-51 and 54-56 have been edited for clarity.

1. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 10-15, 16-23, 25, 26, 29, 40-42 and 54-56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Sorrells et al. U.S. Patent 6,720,866. Claim 1 has been amended to recite substantially all of the limitations of allowable claim 9, thereby mooting the rejection. Claim 3 has been cancelled, thereby mooting its rejection.

2. Claims 30, 31, 39 and 44-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sorrells '866. Claim 1, from which claims 30, 31, 39 and 44-46 depend, is allowable as discussed herein, thereby mooting the rejection.

All claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-52 and 54-56 are now proper in form and patentably distinguished over all grounds of rejection stated in the Office Action. Accordingly, allowance of all claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10-52 and 54-56 is respectfully requested.

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Should the Examiner deem that any further action by the applicants would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone applicants' undersigned representatives.

Respectfully submitted,

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